

# INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

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REPORT

SUBJECT 1. Military Reserve Training at  
the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute

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military reserve training at the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute in  
Gdansk (Danzig) during the period 1950 to 1954. Also included  
(a) information on two periods of summer training

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MILITARY RESERVE TRAINING AT GDANSK POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
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## Introduction

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## A. MILITARY RESERVE TRAINING AT GDANSK POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

1. Training at the Institute in GDANSK

## a. Compulsory Aspect of the Training Program

Immediately after the war, there was no military training at the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute; it was begun in 1949. reserve training was compulsory for men and optional for women. It was very difficult for men to avoid the military program. The only persons completely excused were those who had a definite physical handicap.

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Some men were excused later military service, but they were still required to undergo reserve training while at the institute. Even men who had had previous military service were required to take part in this program.

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Once during each school year each person undergoing military training was given a medical examination. It was not thorough except for men suspected of trying to evade military service. This was the only medical examination given to participants; none was given during summer training unless the man was thought to be in bad health.

Field training was required once every 3 years after completion of the school reserve course. The only way of avoiding this later service was to use underhand methods, such as having someone in the program administration keep one's name off the list or having a doctor give a physical disability certification. this was rather difficult to arrange.

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## b. Military Faculty

A colonel in the Polish Army was in charge of the military reserve training program at the institute. The deputy commander was a captain who was later promoted to major; there were three or four lieutenants also there. These were all the officers permanently stationed there, and they were not so much instructors as general administrators. Most of the actual instructors were army officers who came in from army units in the area when called on. There were also several NCO's. Students with prior military experience who were undergoing the reserve training would assist with the training and administration.

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## c. Student Organization

The body of students taking part in the reserve training program at Gdansk Polytechnic Institute was referred to as Military Study (Studium Wojskowe). The institute was divided into seven sections according to subject fields. (For a list of these seven sections, see par A.1.j.) The body of military students was also divided into seven sections, following the academic lines.

Since the reserve training was a 3-year program, the students in each section were divided into 3 companies, 1 for each year of each section, which gave each of the academic sections 3 companies. The company commanders were students with previous military experience. The squad leaders also had military experience, or were students who were doing better militarily.

## d. Branch Assignment

The reserve training program at the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute was entirely for the signal corps (Sluzba Laczosci). This led all those finishing the program to a reserve commission in the Polish signal corps.

## e. Class Scheduling

Reserve training classes were held one day each week, but not always on the same day. Usually the day for military training was scheduled ahead for an entire semester, and students thus could learn the day in advance. The type of training to be given was not announced, but students could learn it 2 or 3 days in advance so as to prepare for the classes. The day for military training varied by class and academic section; sometimes various classes and sections trained on the same day, sometimes on different days, depending on the type of training given. Classes usually covered the entire day, from 0700 to 1700 or 1800 hours, with an hour for lunch.

## f. Subjects Taught

The same subjects were taught during each of the 3 years of the reserve training course, but in the last 2 years they were studied in more detail. The same signal equipment was used throughout the course; in the first year the students were familiarized with it and in the last 2 years studied it in detail. The subjects were as follows:

Communications from division to regimental level

Radio communications

Telephone communications

Communication with visual signals

Infantry tactics from division to regimental level

Weapons familiarization (carbines, pistols, grenades)

Political training

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Military rules and regulations  
Topography and terrain familiarization  
Close order drill  
General information about other parts of the military forces

About 15 percent of the over-all time allocated to the military training course was used for practical work covering the following military subjects:

Close order drill  
Communications  
Infantry tactics  
Topography  
Familiarization firing

g. Signal Equipment Used in Training

The following signal equipment was used in the reserve training course at Gdansk Polytechnic Institute:

(1) Field Telephone Set

This was an inductor-type telephone, which was in an ebonite box, approximately 15 x 10 x 30 cm, and weighing 3 kg. This set had the following components: handset, inductor, electric bell, and battery.

(2) Field Telephone Switchboard

Two types of these were used: one was smaller, with 10 jacks, and the other was larger with about 30 jacks.

(3) Portable Field Radio Set

This portable radio set was used at company level and higher. It had two basic components: the transmitter and receiver, which were together, and the power source. The transmitter and receiver were in a metal container, which was approximately 40 x 20 x 20 cm and weighed about 15 kg. The power source was in an identical container but was heavier, weighing approximately 18 kg. This radio was manned by one person when stationary and by two when in transit.

(4) Mobile Radio Unit "RSBF"

This set was used from regimental level up. It was mounted on the chassis of a heavy truck of the "ZIS" type. This radio set was not permanent equipment at the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute. It was borrowed from unidentified military units for practical training purposes.

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h. Notebooks and Study Aids

There were no textbooks for the reserve training course. Instead, students took notes from material and lectures presented by the instructors, who brought no texts to class but used only notes and training aids. Sometimes, when

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certain material was presented, students were not allowed to take notes, as for example in the lecture on the division in attack. The instructor did not state that the material was classified but merely told the students to put away their notebooks. During these lectures, students generally paid little attention or slept.

[redacted] first year of training, the notebooks were not bound and the students were permitted to take them home. In the second year, policy changed; the notebooks then in use were collected by the instructors each day after training, and students were not allowed to take them home. The second-year notebooks were bound, so that, although the pages were not numbered, it would have been noticeable if one was removed. Students were permitted to keep the books for several days before an examination.

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As aids the instructors used various posters, charts, and schematic diagrams. When specific radios or weapons were being studied, the actual weapon or radio was usually brought into the classroom.

#### i. Examinations

Only two examinations were given each year, one at the end of each semester. They lasted 2 or perhaps 3 days and were in three parts: a written phase, an oral phase, and practical exercises. The examinations covered not just the instruction given in the preceding semester but all previous instruction and were fairly difficult; [redacted]

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There were three passing grades; most students received the middle one. A student who received a low passing grade or who failed was threatened with such statements as "If you can't be an officer, you can't be an engineer," which indicated that he would be taken out of school if he did not do better in the reserve training course.

[redacted] If a student failed a certain portion of an examination, he was allowed to study more and take this part again. Very few students did this, perhaps 6 or 10 percent. Generally, all students worked quite hard for the tests. A man who received a high grade might get a higher rank in the student chain of command, but this would not carry over to his army rank.

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After graduation all received the rank of warrant officer (chorazy), except some few who received the rank of "officer without rank" (oficer bez stopnia). Very few students, possibly one or two percent, received this rank. This term was written in the military booklet (Ksiazka Wojskowa) of the student awarded this rank. [redacted]

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#### j. Number of Students

The total number of reserve training students in all 3 classes of the 7 engineering sections of the school was about 1390. [redacted]

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[redacted] The students who dropped out between the first and third year had left the institute, voluntarily or because of failure.

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The table below shows the number of students in the reserve training course in 1953, by both academic section and class (the year of reserve training course). These figures, and their total (1390), are approximate.

<u>Academic Section</u>	<u>Class</u>		
	1st	2d	3d
Architecture (Architektura)	80	70	60
Civil Engineering (Wydział Lądowy)	90	80	70
Waterway Engineering (Wydział Wodny)	70	60	50
Electrical Engineering (Wydział Elektryczny)	80	70	60
Mechanical Engineering (Wydział Mechaniczny)	80	70	60
Shipbuilding (Wydział Budowy Okretow)	40	35	30
Chemical Engineering (Wydział Chemiczny)	90	80	65
Total by Class	530	465	395

Thirty to thirty-five percent of the institute students were women. [redacted] at one time there were two women taking the reserve course but [redacted] only one graduating.

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#### k. Uniforms

During 1950, students wore civilian clothing during their weekly training day and had no uniforms. In fall 1951, [redacted]

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[redacted] each reserve training student was issued a pair of coveralls and a pair of low ankle half-boots to wear for training. At the end of the day, the students turned the clothing in at a supply room, and it was issued to other students on their day of training. These were not military coveralls; they were ordinary workclothes.

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During the third year ordinary Polish army uniforms, without rank, were issued to the students, still on the basis of a daily sign-out from the supply room. Because of a uniform shortage, these were worn only on special occasions, such as examinations and parades, or when students would be seen by the public. [redacted] a change occurred; all students wore army uniforms on all training days except when certain outdoor work was to be done.

#### l. Issuance of Booklets

Upon graduation, each student received a military booklet (Książka Wojskowa), which stated that he held a reserve commission as warrant officer (chorazy) in the Polish Army.

#### m. Field Training

During fall and spring, when the weather was good, the weekly day of instruction would be spent outdoors, with the training covering such subjects as:

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Small arms firing  
 Grenade throwing  
 Digging of foxholes  
 Marching  
 Obstacle course training  
 Close order drill  
 Radio or telephone training  
 Athletics

## n. Morale

Most students were unhappy with the program. They had come to study engineering and felt that this just added to the work and brought no worthwhile results. A few students were happy with the program, but only a few.

## o. [ ] Evaluation of the Course

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[ ] the program was effective, since the students did well when they were required to do field work. They made a good showing on tests when compared with officers on active duty. In the examinations held at the end of their second year, they did better than army officers who took the tests. These tests were not graded by people associated with the reserve training program, but by other army officers.

## p. Changes in the Training Program

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[ ] the course changed very little in the several years after he finished it.

Most of the changes that he noticed were minor ones in supply or organization; the program later had more uniforms and more weapons, and generally more equipment of the same type as before.

[ ] the reserve training unit acquired two trucks and a truck-mounted radio. 50X1-HUM

The organizational changes were minor [ ] they did not indicate a different policy, but were only routine changes or evolution. Some of these changes [ ] were that the number of officers on the military faculty was increased from 4 or 5 to 8 or 9 and that the colonel who was originally in command was reassigned and a major took charge.

2. Summer Training at LEGIONOWO

## a. Travel to Area

[ ] summer field training was in late summer 1951, at the military training area in the vicinity of LEGIONOWO (N52-24, E20-55) (UTM DD-9506). [ ] it was to the north of LEGIONOWO and somewhere in the direction of ZEGRZE (N52-28, E21-02) (UTM ED-0213), where a signal school was located.

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The students were required to report to the Gdansk railroad station with enough food for 24 hours. Nothing was said to them about alcoholic beverages. [redacted] a few persons brought some, but [redacted] no intoxication.

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The students boarded freight cars for a trip which lasted approximately 24 hours. The freight cars were furnished with pads upon which they could sleep, but the cars did not have running water or toilet facilities; these things were taken care of at stops.

[redacted]  
the area at LEGIONOWO was still used as a summer training area for students.

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#### b. Arrival at Training Camp

The train stopped around noon, somewhere in the vicinity of LEGIONOWO, and was met by a military band. The students, and the band, then marched for about 1½ hours until they arrived in the training area. [redacted]

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[redacted] When the students arrived they were given a bag of clothing and moved into tents which were already erected. The bag contained a set of underwear and a military field uniform they were to wear for the entire month, consisting of trousers, blouse, cap, and military boots.

#### c. Equipment Issue

On the day following their arrival, the students were issued knapsacks containing military equipment, including soap, towel, and canteen. Dirty towels were exchanged each week for clean ones. [redacted]

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[redacted] the knapsack [redacted] contained personal military items that the students used for the month.

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On the second or third day each student received a weapon. Most students [redacted] received a rifle, although a few received a submachine-gun. Most of these weapons were Polish, but some were Soviet. They were not used for firing. [redacted] these were ordinary weapons, but some had parts missing and others were in bad condition; some of them, however, could probably have been fired. These weapons were kept in a weapons storage tent and picked up each morning and turned in at the end of the day's training. The weapons tent was always guarded, but was not locked. The students were issued other weapons when firing was scheduled.

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#### d. Student Organization

The students were organized into one battalion of four or five companies. The entire battalion was made up of students of the same class from Gdansk Polytechnic Institute, all of whom were taking signal training. Each company was composed of students from a particular academic section of the institute, such as the mechanical, civil, or electrical engineering section. Some sections, which were not large enough to make up a company, were split up, so that there were five companies of equal strength.

The squad was the organizational element below company level; there were no platoons. Sometimes, when training called for it, the students were put into platoon-sized groups, but these were just several squads together, not platoons. There were six or seven squads per company, and about 10 people per squad.

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The battalion commander was an army captain from the regiment that was there to train the students. The company commanders were students who had prior military service

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The squad leaders were students who had been picked earlier by the commander of the detachment back at GDANSK; they seemed to be the students who were doing best militarily.

#### e. Daily Schedule

This schedule was followed every day except Sunday, which was usually free. Sometimes on Saturdays the training was ended at 1600 hours. Although some of the time was supposedly free, it was often taken up with such things as cleaning equipment, and students were usually kept busy until Taps. The schedule was as follows:

0600 - 0610	Reveille
0610 - 0630	Physical training
0630 - 0700	Personal toilet
0700 - 0740	Breakfast
0740 - 0800	Preparation for training
0800 - 1200	Training
1200 - 1300	Dinner
1300 - 1340	Rest time
1400 - 1700 or 1800	Training
1900 - 1940	Supper
2000 - 2130	Free time (personal police and toilet)
2130	Evening roll call
2200	Taps

The students were not permitted to go into LEGIONOWO.

#### f. Training

Usually training was practical work in the field in the morning and classroom studies in the camp area in the afternoon.

The training at LEGIONOWO also was divided into 2-week halves. During the first 2 weeks, before taking the oath of allegiance, about 60 percent of the time was spent in close order drill and infantry tactics; then the oath of allegiance was taken and the training covered more classroom work, with less field work and a less tiring schedule. When the oath was taken there was a parade, and then the students were considered to be officially in the Polish Army, but having no rank.

The subjects taught were:

Communications from squad to regimental level

Radio  
Telephone  
Visual signals

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Infantry tactics from squad to regimental level  
 Familiarization training and firing of small arms  
 Political training  
 Military rules and regulations  
 Topography and terrain familiarization  
 Close order drill  
 General information about branches other than signal

g. Chemical Warfare Training

The chemical warfare training that the students received was only defensive; the instructors said that Poland would not wage offensive chemical warfare. Gas training was usually given a half day at a time. Gas chamber exercises were held in bunkers, four persons entering the bunker at one time. [ ] this was not done very well, since very few were able to don their masks quickly enough to avoid the effects of the gas. There were no gas alerts, but sometimes trainees were required to wear their protective masks, gloves, and capes for extended periods.

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h. Alerts

During the month of training two night alerts were held, in which the students had to pack up quickly and march out into the woods. On these alerts they marched 5 or 10 km into the field and took part in signal training, laying communications wire. [ ] the idea behind these alerts was to get the men quickly packed up and moved out of the barracks area. No daytime alerts were held.

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i. Firing

Only two weapons were fired, the rifle and the submachinegun. The rifles, ordinary Polish rifles, were fired from a prone position at bulls-eye type targets, at a range of 100 m. During most of the month the students were given rifle training from time to time, and this record firing was done near the end of the month.

The other weapon fired was the Polish submachinegun (pistolet maszynowy), which was similar to the Soviet model, except that it had a folding metal stock and a curved box magazine instead of the wooden stock and round drum magazine. The students fired 20 rounds at bulls-eye type targets from a range of 50 m; the weapon was set for automatic fire, but the students were supposed to fire one round at a time.

All grenade training was held with dummy grenades; no live grenades were used.

j. Field Problems

There was one overnight field problem, which lasted approximately 32 hours, starting one morning and lasting until noon of the next day. This problem was given near the end of the month with the entire battalion taking part. [ ] the problem was primarily concerned with signal equipment, mostly setting up communications under combat conditions.

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A 6-hour problem was usually given each week, with the entire battalion taking part. The problems varied from squad and platoon in the attack and defense to problems dealing generally with setting up signal equipment.

#### k. Examinations

There was only one examination, which was given near the end of the month. It lasted for 2 days and consisted of practical exercises and classroom tests, both of which covered generally the same subjects as were taught at Gdansk Polytechnic Institute. All students passed the course and did fairly well. The examination was given by army officers, who seemed satisfied with the results.

#### l. Pay

The students received 15 zlotys and 2 packs of cigarettes per month, and were also issued tobacco and paper for making more cigarettes. There was a canteen where food and drinks could be bought, but students needed to have extra money with them since the 15 zlotys did not go very far.

#### m. Food

[redacted] the food very poor. Meat was served about three times a week; ordinarily the students were served kawa (a soup which usually contained much fat and grain), sometimes with fish or eggs in it. At times the students were served buns, which [redacted] were as hard as bone. They were also given bread, butter, and marmalade.

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#### n. Discipline and Duties

[redacted] the discipline fairly strict. [redacted] perhaps two persons had committed such an offense as sleeping on guard, and for punishment had been confined for 1 week and put on details during that week. For minor offenses, men were given physical punishment; they were required to run until exhausted on so-called attack problems.

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Students did not pull KP or cleaning details; the only duties that they were required to perform were guard details. This was as a walking or standing sentry for a 2- or 3-hour shift about once each week.

#### o. Student Ratings

Students were not informed of any official character or efficiency ratings, but [redacted] reports of some kind were being sent back to Gdansk Polytechnic Institute.

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#### p. [redacted] Evaluation of the Summer Training

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[redacted] the program was effective, since quite a bit was accomplished for the time spent. Most of the students did not like the camp and military life in general, but realized that it must be done if they were to continue their schooling.

### 3. Summer Training at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE (N53-32, E15-48)(UTM WV-5432)

#### a. Travel to DRAWSKO POMORSKIE

The second month of summer training was held at the military training area at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE during August 1952. [redacted]

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[redacted] it was somewhere on the military reservation at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE. The 24-hour trip to DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was made in the same type of freight car used on the trip to LEGIONOWO the year before. Students were again required to bring food for the trip.

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When the train arrived in DRAWSKO POMORSKIE in the afternoon, the students boarded trucks and were taken to the military reservation. [redacted] no official reception there; the students were required to put up their own 12-man tents just as it was getting dark. At this time they were issued uniforms just as in the previous year at LEGIONOWO. [redacted] DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was still being used for summer training of students.

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#### b. Equipment Issue

The equipment issue here was [redacted] the same as that of the year before at LEGIONOWO (see par A.2.c.).

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#### c. Student Organization

The students from GDANSK were again organized into a battalion as at LEGIONOWO, except that this time the companies were not organized by academic section, but each was made up of students from all academic sections. [redacted] possibly to break up groups of friends and throw the students in with strangers.

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The battalion commander was a captain from a regiment at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE. Each company commander was a student with prior military service. The squad leaders were students, usually those doing well or having had military experience.

#### d. Daily Schedule

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The schedule followed here was very similar to the schedule which was followed the year before at LEGIONOWO (see par A.2.e.) [redacted]

#### e. Training

The subjects taught here in training and the signal equipment used were the same as at LEGIONOWO the year before (par A.2.f.) Here more emphasis was placed on the signal subjects and less time was spent on general military subjects. At LEGIONOWO 60 to 70 percent of the time was spent on practical work, while at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE 60 to 70 percent was spent on classroom work. At DRAWSKO POMORSKIE the students did not march to training, but were taken there by trucks; the instructors were more pleasant and the students were not treated so much like recruits. Sometimes when the students were out at training the instructor would have someone posted as a guard to watch for an approaching inspector, and the students would be allowed to sit around and talk and joke; they also spent some time picking berries during outdoor training. [redacted]

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#### f. Firing

[redacted] the students fired pistols, but did not fire rifles at all. [redacted]

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## g. Field Problems

There were no overnight field problems during the month of training at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE. Sometimes full-day or half-day problems were held; these were almost entirely concerned with signal matters, such as setting up communications under combat conditions. Sometimes the students rode through the countryside in trucks with an instructor in the rear of each truck, who pointed out how the differences in terrain would affect signal communications. The students almost always rode to the field for problems and did not march there as they had done the year before.

## h. Examinations

At the end of the month there was an examination very similar to the one given the year before, except that the content was a little more advanced. This examination took 2 days, and all students passed. The examination was given by officers, who seemed to be satisfied with the results.

## i. Pay

The students were paid the same amount as they had been the year before, 15 zlotys per month. Cigarettes and tobacco were issued.

## j. Food

The food was generally the same as at LEGIONOWO, except that it was better prepared and meat was served more often. [ ] this was because the kitchen at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was better supplied and organized.

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## k. Discipline and Duties

The military discipline at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was less rigid than at LEGIONOWO. Possibly the standards here were the same, but there was seldom any punishment. [ ] this was possibly because the personnel, both officers and students, were pleasanter. As in LEGIONOWO, the students were not required to perform KP or cleaning details; their only extra duties were as sentries, for 2 or 3 hours per week.

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## l. Student Ratings

There were no ratings made known to students, but [ ] some type of ratings were sent back to Gdansk Polytechnic Institute.

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## m. Differences Between Summer Training at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE and at LEGIONOWO

The reserve training camp at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was generally like the camp at LEGIONOWO. The training at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was similar to that at LEGIONOWO but a little more advanced. No alerts were held at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE during this month of training. The big difference was that at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE conditions were pleasanter, both for the students and for the cadre. [ ] this was because the camp at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE was better organized.

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[ ] army personnel were pleased at being assigned to DRAWSKO POMORSKIE, but dissatisfied if assigned to LEGIONOWO. [ ]

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[ ] there were both first and second year students at both places.

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n. [redacted] Evaluation of Summer Training

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[redacted] students learned more at DRAWSKO POMORSKIE than they had the summer before at LEGIONOWO. [redacted] perhaps the relaxed atmosphere was more conducive to learning. [redacted] the students learned quite a bit for the time spent.

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COMMENT:

1.

[redacted] After the completion of the reserve training program at Gdansk Polytechnic Institute, men were called up by the Military Regional Command Headquarters (Wojskowa Komenda Rejonowa - WKR) to take their required 3 months of active duty. [redacted]

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[redacted] bribery was very common in Poland, since salaries were generally quite low and it was necessary to obtain additional money for living expenses. The few people in Poland who did not go along with this bribery were usually laughed at. Sometime earlier an officer had been relieved from command of a WKR office because of bribery.

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